

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 AGR-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 TRSE-00

AID-05 OMB-01 /049 W

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P R 211940Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1109

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMCONSUL PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GEORGETOWN 0563

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, GY

SUBJECT: SUGAR STRIKE "ADJOURNED"

REF: GEORGETOWN 0553

1. SUMMARY: AFTER SEVEN WEEK STRIKE, UNRECOGNIZED GUYANA AGRICULTURAL WORKERS UNION (GAWU) CALLED ON SUGAR WORKERS TO RETURN TO WORK ON APRIL 21. GAWU CALLED FOR RESUMPTION OF WORK FOLLOWING ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTERIM WAGE INCREASE, ALTHOUGH GAWU ITSELF NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN DISCUSSIONS LEADING TO INTERIM AWARD. WORK APPEARS TO BE RETURNING TO NORMAL ON MOST ESTATES, BUT POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER DISRUPTION REMAINS. END SUMMARY.

2. AT PRESS CONFERENCE APRIL 19, LEADER OF OPPOSITION PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP) AND HONORARY LEADER OF GUYANA AGRICULTURAL WORKERS UNION (GAWU) DR. CHEDDI JAGAN ANNOUNCED THAT SEVEN WEEK OLD SUGAR WORKERS STRIKE WOULD BE QUOTE ADJOURNED UNQUOTE EFFECTIVE APRIL 21. THE UNRECOGNIZED BUT POWERFUL GAWU HAD CONTINUED ITS STRIKE DESPITE SETTING UP OF COMPULSORY ARBITRATION TRIBUNAL TO SETTLE 1974-75 CONTRACT DISPUTE BETWEEN GUYANA SUGAR PRODUCERS

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ASSOCIATION (GSPA) AND MANPOWER CITIZENS ASSOCIATION (MPCA),

RECOGNIZED UNION (REFTEL). ACCORDING TO PPP PARTY PAPER MIRROR JAGAN TOLD NEWSMEN THAT GAWU WOULD CONTINUE TO CHAMPION SUGAR WORKERS RIGHTS AND HINTED THAT STRIKE MIGHT BE RESUMED AT LATER DATE. JAGAN ALSO REITERATED THAT GAWU HAD NO CONFIDENCE IN ARBITRATION TRIBUNAL.

3. SUGAR INDUSTRY SOURCES REPORT THAT BACK TO WORK CALL SEEMS TO BE EFFECTIVE. ON MORNING OF APRIL 21, SUGAR ESTATES IN BERBICE AREA EXPERIENCED NORMAL MONDAY WORKERS TURNOUT. RETURN TO WORK MORE DIFFICULT TO JUDGE IN DEMERARA AREA ESTATES SINCE WEEKEND RAINFALL PREVENTED BURNING OF CANE FIELDS IN PREPARATION FOR NORMAL CUTTING OPERATIONS.

4. GAWU AND PPP QUOTE ADJOURNMENT UNQUOTE OF STRIKE FOLLOWED CLOSELY UPON AGREEMENT BETWEEN TRADES UNION CONGRESS (TUC) ACTING ON BEHALF OF MPCA, MINISTER OF LABOR, AND GSPA ON INTERIM WAGE INCREASE. INTERIM AGREEMENT, FORMALLY ANNOUNCED AT APRIL 19 SPECIAL SESSION OF ARBITRATION TRIBUNAL, PROVIDES FOR FIVE PERCENT INTERIM WAGE INCREASE FOR 1975 AND GUYANESE DOLS 4,000,000 ADVANCE ON FINAL WAGE SETTLEMENT. PAYMENT IS REPORTEDLY TO BE MADE WITHIN TWO WEEKS OF FULL RESUMPTION OF WORK. GSPA CHAIRMAN TREFOR ELLIS TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT THE GUYANESE DOLS 4,000,000 WOULD BE PAID FROM FUNDS ALREADY RESERVED FOR PROFIT-SHARING.

5. EFFORT OF ARBITRATION TRIBUNAL TO REACH FINAL SETTLEMENT CONTINUES THIS WEEK WITH FURTHER PRESENTATION BY MPCA PRESIDENT RICHARD ISHMAEL. BEHIND SCENES EFFORTS BY TUC, MINISTER OF LABOR, AND PRIME MINISTER TO PRODUCE AGREEMENT WILL UNDOUBTEDLY ALSO CONTINUE.

6. COMMENT: IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER GAWU'S QUOTE ADJOURNMENT UNQUOTE OF STRIKE IS SIMPLY EFFORT TO SAVE FACE WHEN BACK TO WORK TREND ALREADY OBVIOUS OR IF FURTHER DISRUPTION OF SUGAR INDUSTRY PLANNED. ONCE WORK RESUMES, HOWEVER, IT MAY BE DIFFICULT TO ORGANIZE MORE STRIKE ACTION IMPOSING NEW HARDSHIPS ON WORKERS. WORKERS MAY HESITATE TO FOLLOW NEW GAWU STRIKE ORDER WHEN SEVEN WEEK STRIKE PRODUCED SUCH RELATIVELY MEAGER RESULTS.  
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## Message Attributes

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